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SUBJECT: JERUSALEM MEDIA REACTION (10/06): Palestinians question why the PA agreed to postpone the vote on the Goldstone report

Main Stories:

News on the confrontations between Palestinians and the Israeli police at Al-Aqsa Mosque continues to receive prominent coverage in the local press. The dailies report that the police closed the main entrance to Al-Aqsa Mosque for the second day, denying all Palestinians, except the elderly, entrance to pray. Photos on the front pages show the Israeli police arresting young Palestinian boys who were at the demonstrations against the closure. In related news, the dailies report on solidarity demonstrations taking place in most of the Palestinian cities in protest of the Israeli actions. Condemnations of the attack against the mosque from Arab and Muslim countries continue. In its weekly cabinet meeting yesterday, the Council of Ministers condemned the Israeli attacks.

Al-Quds front pages news on yesterday's interview of Palestinian Authority (PA) President Mahmoud Abbas with Yemeni TV during his visit to Yemen. When asked about the Goldstone report, President Abbas noted that the PA doesn't have the right to postpone the vote of any report since the PA is an observer at the UN and in the Human Rights Council. Abbas reiterated that the postponement was made after the US, Europe, Russia and China found that the report needed more time to be studied.

The dailies report on Palestinians' reaction to the postponement of the vote on the Goldstone report. National and civil society organizations demonstrated yesterday in Ramallah against the action. In a separate coverage, Al-Quds reports that the Palestinian Liberation Organization's (PLO) response to US pressure to postpone the vote has created a severe internal crisis, leading to the formation of a committee to investigate in the implications. Some

Palestinian officials, particularly Prime Minister Salam Fayyad, opposed the demands of the US Consul General in Jerusalem asking the PA to postpone the vote. According to coverage, Fayyad aggressively rejected the request of the US Consul and noted after hitting the table "you are weakening the authority of President Abbas and the PA, the same way you did with the settlements issue." The report notes that one official, however, responded positively to the US request and convinced Abbas to accept it.

The dailies report on the national reconciliation efforts expected to resume in Cairo this month. The dailies quote Egyptian Foreign Minister Aboul Gheit noting that the Palestinian national reconciliation agreement will be signed in Cairo on October 25. He also noted in a press conference in Amman that the Palestinian elections will take place sometime between March and June 2010, not in January as was previously planned.

BLOCK QUOTES:

1) Yunis Amouri opines in Al-Quds independent daily under the title "The official Palestinian position from Goldstone's report" (10/06): "The official Palestinian justifications that we've heard concerning the postponement of the vote on the Goldstone report are unreasonable and weak. We all know about the relationship between the US and Israel, and we don't need proof to convince us and the whole world that Washington imposed pressure to postpone the vote. But an admission by the Palestinian Authority that it agreed to postpone the vote due to US pressure, this by itself is a scandal".

2) Muhannad Abdel Hamid opines in al-Ayyam under the title

"Investigating in the Goldstone's report and beginning of the Change?" (10/06): "In his Cairo speech and media interviews, President Obama promised to achieve a two state solution. However, he reversed his position when he exerted pressure on the PA to resume negotiations with Israel without the cessation of settlements, and when he pressured the PA to agree to postpone the vote of the Goldstone report to the International Court ... If the US is only going to impose the Israeli solution ... how feasible is it to abide by Obama's, Clinton's and Mitchell's advice? How feasible it is to go back to the negotiations table?

RUBINSTEIN